

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE CONDITIONS
OF THE WORLD TRANSFORMATION: TRADITIONAL VALUES
AND CULTURE**

One of the most significant features of the global system development is its fundamental uncertainty, connection volatility, dynamics of correlations, variability of parameters, and multivariance of development areas. It is important that it is not just about the suddenness of changes, when the available information and limited knowledge are insufficient for the purpose of predicting further development, but also about the tense and anxious psychological state of society, which is caused by expecting consequences of the development of social, technogenic and exogenous factors and does not allow the elites to make decisions appropriate to the situation.

Discrediting the principle of globalization in the world development (despite China's claims to become a new subject of the unipolar world after the United States) leads to attempts to shape the world as bipolar, polycentric, multipolar, as a polarless or hybrid system with "pluralistic" or "asymmetric multipolarity". In May 2024, the British magazine *The Economist*, a mainstay of the Western media, publicly proclaimed the collapse of the "ideal liberal world order"¹. This is evidenced by the unprecedented increase in economic sanctions over the past quarter of the century, the fragmentation of cash flows, leading to instability in the global economic system, and huge financial injections into national economies in the struggle for economic supremacy, which the magazine calls the "subsidy war". However, the most important thing is the usurpation of state functions by

¹ The *Economist* predicted the collapse of the liberal international order. <https://www.bfm.ru/news/549946>

international institutions and “clubs of like-minded countries”, which leads to disintegrating arms control mechanisms, destructing international law, sliding into geopolitical anarchy, and facing catastrophic consequences in the global economy.

In 2024, a sense of uncertainty supported the intense anticipation accompanying the elections in the USA and the struggle in the European Parliament. In 2025, presidential and local elections in 13 European countries will affect the political balance of power on the world stage. The conflict-causing factors are the internal political crises in France, Germany, Romania, Georgia, South Korea, Syria, Israel, Iran, as well as the incomplete, open nature of the development trajectories of the Ukrainian conflict, which may be related either to the peaceful settlement or to the ongoing escalation by countries supporting the Ukrainian regime. The response of individual states to the situation of uncertainty is characterized by unpredictability, where the “new normality” becomes a factor that makes it possible to rely on military-force strategies in foreign and domestic policy, which may lead to the chain reaction of defrosting conflicts.

If we analyze this process of the geopolitical transformation of the world in terms of its axiology, the dynamics of that component of the culture, which is related to the value system, will become obvious.

In the past decade, the concept “value”, as well as the concept “culture”, has become one of the main ones in the geopolitical discourse. This is due to the fact that any confrontation is based not only on a conflict of interests, most often economic and political, but also on a conflict of worldviews and meanings. Values are deep-rooted attitudes that have developed over the centuries and are determined by the peculiarities of a people’s historical development, which are of great importance to the people, are reflected in language, traditions and customs, and become the basis of legal regulations. These attitudes influence the nature of people’s actions in both everyday and extreme situations, determine their political choices, social ideas and ideals, and images of the future.

That is why values are the main goal of information wars, when the injection of false information not only distorts the picture of social reality and builds an unreliable image of it, but also deforms people's ideas about the world and the ideal image of the world order, which a particular power aspires to. Therefore, any expansion and scrapping of the system begins with information impact and pressure on the axiosphere. And it is their own values and meanings that, first of all, promote countries into the surrounding world in the process of conflicts and wars, striving for changing the conquered spaces in accordance with their axiological attitudes. Only then material expansion takes place.

Establishing a new world order with its own dominant values is also safer. This is explicitly stated in Britain's Comprehensive Strategy for Defense, Diplomacy and International Development, which notes that among the values that are "fundamental to our national identity, democracy and way of life ... are universal human rights, the rule of law, freedom of speech, justice and equality"², as "the world, in which democratic societies flourish and fundamental human rights are protected, is much more favorable for us in terms of preserving our sovereignty, ensuring our country's safety and prosperity"³. In fact, leading US politicians proclaim the same thing, speaking about direct dependence on values and security: "We protect our cherished, greatest values not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because it makes our country stronger and keeps us safe. At all times – in times of war and peace; in times of calm and in times of great upheaval, our values remain the best asset to national safety"⁴.

² Global Britain in the Age of Competition: The Comprehensive Strategy for Defense, Diplomacy, and International Development. P. 13–14. URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999101/03335-CO-Integrated-Review-Foreward-and-Overview-FINAL-RUSSIAN-WEB-DISPLAYABLE-PDF.pdf

³ Ibid.

⁴ Remarks by the President on National Security. The White House. Office of the Press Secretary. May 21, 2009. P. 2. URL: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-President-national-security-5-21-09>

Today, the desire to spread own influence to other countries is increasingly designated as “axiopolitics”⁵. This term appeared quite recently – in 2013, it was introduced into political theory and practice by the Russian emigrant sociologist I. N. Andrushkevich, although other scientists – representatives of the Izborsk Club, including A. I. Fursov, – prefer the concept “psychohistorical”⁶ (or mental, cognitive, consciential⁷) war.

At first glance, the most important thing for any country seems to be its material and economic basis. Meanwhile, replacing some values with others means replacing one culture with another, since it is values that act as the foundation of ideology, in accordance with which both economy and politics are built. Therefore, protection from information influence and protection of own value spaces are the main task in modern confrontations.

It cannot be argued that this truth was beyond comprehension of those who implemented in Russia the reforms of the 1990s and dismantled its culture in parallel with dismantling its political, economic and social institutions. On the contrary, the revision of the axiosphere was carried out consciously and purposefully, and the attitude towards liberal values as panhuman and universal became dominant. Meanwhile, the axiological theory has shifted to the positivist approach, to the interpretation of values as needs. And needs are something that treats a person not as a bearer of culture, but as a representative of nature, whose needs are universal, and their differences are determined only by interests.

This was well understood by politicians and philosophers during the Cold War, and it was then, in the 1960s, that axiological issues began to be actively

⁵ The term “axiopolitics” was introduced in 2013 by the Russian emigrant sociologist I. N. Andrushkevich. / Andrushkevich I. N. Axiopolitics orients geopolitics (The influence of the scale of religious and moral values) // Russian Notebooks. Historical and political analyses and comments. No. 15. Buenos Aires, March 2013 // RNL. 03/14/2013.

⁶ Fursov A. I. The psychohistorical war. Hidden subjects of global governance and falsification of history. / Izborsk Club. Reports. Moscow, 2014.

⁷ Krupnov Yu. V. How Russia can prevent the fifth world war. The consciential war. [Electronic resource] // Yury Krupnov: [website]. URL: <http://kroupnov.ru/pubs/2005/02/09/10403> (Access date: 03/15/2025).

developed. And this was determined by neither some scientific interest, nor a specific “scientific fashion”; it was developing the foundation of the war of ideologies of that time, no less important than the arms race. It was the time when the theory of values began to be developed in the works by O. G. Drobnitsky, L. N. Stolovich, V. P. Tugarinov, A. G. Kharchev, and the very concept of value became system-forming and was introduced into the titles of the works themselves⁸. It is important that the concept of value was primarily considered in relation to human goal-setting, as “the essence of an object, phenomenon and their properties to be needed by people of a certain society (or class) and an individual as ... ideas and motives as norms, goals or ideals”⁹, as “social ideals, and personal activity on this basis”¹⁰.

In parallel with developing the theory of values in the Soviet Union, the same work was carried out in the USA and Great Britain. In the studies by F. Northrop, Ch. Morris, I. R. Cowell, Ch. Fried, R. Lipley, K. Sitaram, R. Cogdell the concept of value correlated with human needs. An exception to this series of publications is P. Sorokin’s fundamental work “Social and cultural dynamics”, published in 1962; it may be related to the author’s Russian origin and his ideological formation in Russia.

In fact, the value conception becomes the philosophical justification of the ideology of two opposing systems – the Soviet one and the American one, in which the first asserted the primacy of socialist ideals, and the second – the primacy of economic interest. Nonrandomness of this scientific and philosophical discussion is confirmed by the involvement in this discourse of

⁸ Drobnitsky O. G. The world of vivified objects: The problem of value and the Marxist philosophy. Moscow, 1967; Stolovich L. N. The nature of aesthetic value. Moscow, 1972; Tugarinov V. P. About values of life and culture. Moscow, 1960; Kharchev A. G. The problem of value in philosophy. Moscow – Leningrad, 1966.

⁹ Tugarinov V. P. The theory of values in Marxism. – Moscow: Progress, 1968. – 111 p.

¹⁰ Narsky I. S. Value and usefulness // Philosophical Sciences. 1969. No. 3. P. 62–64.

post-industrialist theorists – Z. Brzezinski, E. Toffler, J. K. Galbraith, K. Boulding, who justify the change of the value system in societies following the industrial one. It is defined as “post-materialistic”, focused on the quality of life, interest in professional activity, and the desire for self-expression in individual hobbies and pastime. This system is obvious to develop in a society, in which material needs are satisfied. But it is important that the manifestation of such changes is described precisely through the axiological methodology.

Unfortunately, Russian authors’ works did not have the same impact on politics as it happened in the West. In fact, two trends began to simultaneously develop in the Soviet Union. One, philosophical, was aimed at developing the theory of values. For example, in 1988, S. F. Anisimov’s book “Spiritual Values: Production and Consumption” was published, where the author showed the importance of the society’s metaphysical content in its spiritual life. The second trend was political, and proclaimed in 1985–1991 a course of reforms that later became known as “Perestroika”.

Today, it is obvious that the Perestroika and transformations of the 1990s were preceded and accompanied by powerful, purposeful ideological – in fact, value-based – pressure. It was carried out both in the economic sphere, supported by advertising, and in the scientific and philosophical, and in the field of education, accompanied by constant stuffing into the press, publishing works that revealed – sometimes truthfully, more often tendentiously, – individual facts of Soviet history, with scientific works financed by Western scientific funds like the Soros Foundation and aimed at destroying Soviet ideology. This powerful background blurred the voices of those who sought to defend ideals that possessed strength, justice, and appeal to the people, but were largely devalued by the Soviet politicians themselves.

The heavy impact on the Russians’ consciousness was mainly based on axiology, and it was values that became the main goal of the impact. Meanwhile, Western political strategists interpreted the specificity of the Russian value field

as backwardness, and the incongruence with Western values – as the situation that needed to be corrected. In accordance with the leading provisions of the US National Security Strategies, American values were presented as universal, and panhuman.

Russians were persuaded that collectivism as a socialist ideal is an ideologeme aimed at diminishing the importance of a person, a relic that does not allow persons to think about themselves and their individual well-being, historicism that came from the era of primitive communism, justice as “equalization due to poverty”¹¹, non-possessiveness as an obstacle to well-being, self-sacrifice as submissiveness to authority, serfdom¹². Such a negative description was so unattractive that it became the basis for rethinking traditional values in the mass consciousness and turning to Western ones – individualism and liberalism. Herewith, the ideologists showed that the Soviet, and then the Russian, people themselves came to the conclusion that the former values were unproductive and became an obstacle to modern development, as well as did not meet the requirements of the era: “a fairly massive stratum was formed, which, from its own experience, came to the liberal version of Russia’s identity and to liberal criticism of this identity”¹³.

What has modern history shown? The fact that traditional values have not been lost in Russia and remain significant, and the relevance of the values, such

¹¹ Yasin E. (2004) *New Era – Old Worries: Economic Policy* / Evgeny Yasin. – Moscow: The Liberal Mission: New publishing house. 452 p. (Library of the Liberal Mission Foundation); ISBN 5-98379-016-1. Chapter “Modernization of the economy and the value system”. [Electronic resource] URL: <https://itexts.net/avtor-evgeniy-grigorevich-yasin/202519-novaya-epoha-starye-trevogi-ekonomicheskaya-politika-evgeniy-yasin/read/page-29.html> (Access date: 05/05/2024).

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Klyamkin I. (2003) *Russian ideas and modern civilization // Westerners and Nationalists: Is Dialogue Possible?* / The Liberal Mission Foundation; [ed. and comp. by A. Trapkova]. – Moscow: The Liberal Mission: United humanitarian publishing house. 474 p. – P. 412.

as sacrifice, collectivism and statehood, embodied in the maxim “Die yourself, but save your friend”, is manifested today in the same way as before.

This trend of preserving traditional values is clearly evident in the modern world. It is no coincidence that various countries’ concepts of national security appeal precisely to the values that become the basis and normative framework for them. The most consistent and emphasized value systems, which almost completely coincide, are highlighted in the National Security Strategies of the United States¹⁴ and Great Britain. Moreover, it is precisely the values that are interpreted as “panhuman” and “universal” that are the main argument of political rhetoric aimed at justifying the possibility of “using military force unilaterally, if required” for protecting values and interests¹⁵.

This does not mean that the difference in value systems is irreconcilable, becoming the axis of the rift between nations. On the contrary, striving for peace leads to a convergence of fundamental values. It is no coincidence that in the Section “Values and Principles” of the UN Millennium Declaration, it is noted that “in the 21st century a number of fundamental values will be essential for international relations”: they are freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, as well as “elimination of threats to international peace and safety”¹⁶.

However, there is a pattern here: the convergence of values is possible in the situation of rapprochement between peoples and states. During economic, political, and military conflicts traditional values come to the fore, which, in the

¹⁴ Savin L. What’s new in the new US National Security Strategy. [Electronic resource] // PRAVDINFORM. URL: <http://trueinform.ru/modules.php?name=Laid&file=article&sid=20617> (Access date: 01/08/2024).

¹⁵ The US National Security Strategy 2015 // Russian Legal Portal: Pashkov Library. [Electronic resource] URL: <https://constitutions.ru/?p=17992> (Access date: 01/08/2024)

¹⁶ The United Nations Millennium Declaration. Adopted by General Assembly’s Resolution 55/2 dated September 08, 2000. URL: https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/declarations/summitdecl.shtml

face of existential threats, become the foundation for the world perception and the basis of human life in a given historical period¹⁷.

These foundations become the most important support of the state during the period of geopolitical turbulence, helping it not only respond to new challenges in a timely and adequate manner, but also find new opportunities for ensuring the stability of the chosen political and economic course. That is why the values of Confucianism are still significant for China. The axiology of India, with its reliance on Hinduism and Buddhism, is equally specific. These are the principles of the Juche ideology, based on the historical national identity in South Korea, Indonesia's Pancasila conception that recognizes the importance of ancient wisdom and the doctrine of the hope of achieving an ideal life, Malaysia's ideology of Rukun Negara, which includes the foundations of national tradition.

Differences in value principles caused by these countries' historical development means one thing – the world is diverse, each nation has gone its own way in history and has formed the system of values specific to it. These values cannot be the same, but reliance on one's own traditions can be combined with respect for other nations' traditions, sometimes fundamentally different from one's own. And in this sense, the concept "traditionalism" does not mean backwardness, but expresses the greatness of the people that has gone through a significant historical path and recognizes other peoples' right to their own vision of the world and their own wisdom.

Moreover, in the context of the revolutionary development of artificial intelligence technologies, the militarization of outer space and the creation of autonomous weapons, advances in biotechnology and nanotechnology, the deteriorating situation in the field of cybersecurity and data protection, economic challenges, such as the transition to clean energy, global inflation and rising

¹⁷ Sayamov Yu. Values and Meanings of International Relations // International Life. 2017. No. 9. URL: <https://interaffairs.ru/jauthor/material/1914>

prices, trade wars and sanctions, the formation of environmental friendliness as a new consumption trend, changes in the banking sector under the influence of digital currencies, in the conditions of permanent fluctuations, it is traditions that become a kind of “anchor” that keeps the state in balance in relation to the individual, society and nature, and it is tradition that becomes the fulcrum for building a just, reliable, secure world providing conditions for “preserving cultural and civilizational identity” and “equal development opportunities for each state”¹⁸.

¹⁸ The Conception of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation. Approved by the Edict Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 229 dated March 31, 2023 // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.mid.ru/ru/detail-material-page/1860586/?lang=ru> (Access date: 01/08/2025)